

COMMENT ON THE SUPPLEMENT TO THE APPLICATION CONCERNING  
THE VALIDATION OF *AMAUROBIUS* C. L. KOCH AND  
*COELOTES* BLACKWALL Z.N.(S.) 1625

(see vol. 21, pages 150–153; vol. 22, pages, 140–141)

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Though I agree with the main object of the original application by Levi and Kraus, viz., to validate the generic names *Amaurobius* C. L. Koch and *Coelotes* Blackwall in the accustomed sense (cf. my earlier letter to the secretary—together with Dr. L. van der Hammen, Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, Sept. 9, 1964), I have to protest against their supplementary proposal on this question. Especially the neotype selection for *Drassus atropos* Walckenaer is highly objectionable and in my opinion illegal.

As has been pointed out by me (Chrysanthus, 1965, *Tijdschr. Ent.* 108, (3) : 61–71), the type of *Drassus atropos* Walckenaer, 1830 (*Faune française, Aranéides* 27 : 171) is without any doubt identical with the species described later as *Aranea terrestris* Wider, 1834 (*Museum Senckenbergianum* 1 : 215), while the species that generally is indicated with the name *Coelotes atropos* has as its oldest valid specific name *saxatilis* Blackwall, 1833 (*Lond. Phil. Mag. Journ. Sci.* [3] 3 : 436).

Levi and Kraus (1965, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 22 (2) : 140) accept my point of view, or at least indicate that it is of a high probability.

Levi and Kraus's selection of a specimen of *Coelotes saxatilis* Blackwall, 1833, to be the neotype of *Drassus atropos* Walckenaer violates Article 75(c) of the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature on three accounts: (1) they do not give their reasons for believing all of the original type material destroyed or lost; (2) there is clear evidence that the specimen selected by them is not consistent with what is known of the original type material; the original description of *Drassus atropos* does not fit the specimen chosen as the neotype of this species, but clearly is based on a specimen of *Coelotes terrestris* (Wider); (3) the neotype came from "Harz, Stolberg", in Germany, while the actual type locality of the species is "la forêt de Villers Cotterets", about 70 km NE. of Paris, France. At the true type locality of *Drassus atropos* Walckenaer no specimens of the species (*Coelotes saxatilis*) to which the neotype belongs has ever been found (although the famous French arachnologist Simon collected there), *C. terrestris* (Wider) being the only one of the two ever met with at the type locality.

The first of these three points is a technicality, but the other two are important and in my opinion invalidate the neotype selection, unless that is made under the plenary powers of the Commission.

In my opinion the action by Levi and Kraus to pin the name *atropos* to a species of which we are certain that it was not meant by the original author, their neotype being specifically different from the true type, is inadvisable. The name *atropos* (1) has been compromised by having been used for two different species, (2) probably has been used more often for the wrong species, and (3) though well known to arachnologists, is not the name of a species of importance in applied sciences. Therefore it seems most advisable to me to suppress this name altogether and accept the unambiguous specific names *saxatilis* Blackwall, 1833, and *terrestris* Wider, 1834, for the two species in question. This question has been more extensively dealt with by me in my above quoted paper (Chrysanthus, 1965: 62–67), to which I may refer for further details.

My views are supported by the following arachnologists, who expressed their approval in correspondence:

Prof. Dr. P. Bonnet, Toulouse (10.vi.65)

"En ce qui concerne votre étude sur les *Coelotes*, . . . , on doit admettre d'une façon définitive vos identifications, à savoir *terrestris* Wider 1834 = *atropos* Walck. 1830  
*saxatilis* Bl. 1833 = *atropos* auct.

Ainsi, d'après votre travail, toutes mes références concernant ces deux espèces dans

*Bibliogr. Araneorum* sont à changer; il faudra rapporter à *atropos* tout ce qui est à *terrestris* et admettre une espèce *saxatilis* avec toutes les références d'*atropos*.

Pour la désignation officielle de ces deux espèces, la chose est assez embarrassante: évidemment, il y a, d'abord, l'application de la règle de priorité qui veut que l'on adopte *atropos* Walck. 1830 (= *terrestris* Wider 1834) et *saxatilis* Bl. 1833 (= *atropos* auct.); il y a ensuite votre proposition, qui pour mettre fin à une confusion regrettable, fait appel au bon sens et propose *terrestris* Wider et *saxatilis* Bl.

Dans les deux cas, il y a, pour moi, un mot de grande valeur: *priorité* et *bon sens*: toutefois il ne me paraît pas impossible de les concilier: car maintenant que la dualité et la séparation des 2 espèces est bien établie, il n'y a plus de confusion possible et l'on doit admettre que, désormais, tout le monde appellera *atropos* ce qui est vraiment *atropos* Wlk (= *terrestris*) et *saxatilis* ce qui est sans conteste, le *saxatilis* Bl. (les anciens *atropos*). Quant à la confusion d'autrefois, tant pis!

Mais ayant écrit cela, je me suis mis à réfléchir encore et j'ai vu que vous faisiez les gros yeux à la pensée que l'on aura maintenant des *atropos* qui ne seront plus les *atropos* des anciens auteurs et c'est cela évidemment qui justifie votre proposition de bon sens. Alors, je crois bien que je voterai pour vous."

Dr. G. H. Locket (Stockbridge) and Dr. A. F. Millidge (Coulsdon) (26.v.65)

"We have read your paper 'On the identity of *Coelotes atropos* (Walck.), *saxatilis* (Blackwall) and *terrestris* (Wider)' and have again considered the suggestion put forward on p. 67 for solving the problem of the specific names. We are in favour of the second suggestion, namely to suppress the name *C. atropos*, resulting in the conservation of the name *C. terrestris* (Wider) (= *terrestris* auct.) and to introduce the name *C. saxatilis* (Blackwall) (= *atropos* auct.). We favoured this solution in our letter to you of 15th Nov. 1964 and are confirmed in our view by your argument (on p. 65 and verbally to G.H.L. at Frankfurt) that before the appearance of our 'British spiders' vol. II (1953) and Wiehle's paper in 1963 (Zool. Jahrb. Systematik 90 pp. 227-298) the two species were often confused, so that the use of *saxatilis* would now actually give more precise information of identity (free of possibility of such confusion) and would not disturb existing records unduly."

Dr. J. A. L. Cooke (Oxford) (31.v.65)

"I was aware that the *Coelotes* problem was complex, but I was nevertheless surprised by the difficulties, which you have so clearly explained. I would agree that your second choice (suppression of *C. atropos*) is best, and I hope other workers will follow your lead."

Mr. J. R. Parker (Carlisle) (2.vi.65)

"Thank you very much... (for your paper)... on the identity of the *Coelotes* which I found of great interest, as there has been so much confusion in the past. Your proposals to solve the problem of the specific names must now be perfectly clear to everyone and it seems to me that your suggestion on p. 67, paragraph 2, is as you rightly say the most logical solution."

Dr. L. van der Hammen, Curator Dept. of Arachnology, Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, whom I often consulted during the preparation of my paper fully agrees with me regarding the contents.

Summarizing, I might suggest that the Commission accept the following paragraphs of Levi's and Kraus's original proposal (1964, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 21 : 153) : par. 13(1), (2), (3), (4)(a), (5), (6), (7) but not par. 13(4)(b) nor the revised par. 13(4,b) as published by these authors later (Levi and Kraus, 1965, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.*, 22(2) : 141). And in addition the Commission should:

- (1) use its plenary powers to suppress for the purposes of the Law of Priority, but not for those of the Law of Homonymy the specific name *atropos* Walckenaer, 1830 (*Faune française*, Aranéides 27 : 171) as published in the combination *Drassus atropos*.
- (2) place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *saxatilis* Blackwall, 1833 (*Lond. Phil. Mag. Journ. Sci.* [33] : 436) as published in the combination *Clubiona saxatilis*;
  - (b) *terrestris* Wider, 1834 (*Museum Senckenbergianum* 1 : 215) as published in the combination *Aranea terrestris*;
- (3) place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *atropos* Walckenaer, 1830, as suppressed in (1) above.